



During SEEK23, Curtis presented Adam and Maria Bremerkamps with the FOCUS Alumni St. Francis Xavier Honor, which recognizes FOCUS alumni who continue to live committed to Jesus Christ as missionary disciples beyond campus.

**Watch  
the  
video  
here!**



## YOU BRING THE GOSPEL TO ALL THE PLACES WHERE FOCUS ALUMNI GO!

Not only have you been on mission with FOCUS missionaries who serve on college campuses, but also with those who serve at parishes and dioceses. You bring the Gospel to many places as you go on mission with the thousands of students who, post-graduation, live their lives with Christ, seeking to answer His command to make disciples of all nations.

**More than 65,000 FOCUS student and missionary alumni** are in their parishes, families and workplaces, sharing Christ's love and mercy.

Your investment has a generational impact as college students and missionaries who leave FOCUS campuses bring missionary discipleship into your cities and parishes. They share Christ within their communities and are raising their children to be faithful Catholics.

### **Do you see the hope you bring to the future of the Church?**

More than ever, your parishes and diocese must become a center of missionary activity, bringing hope to families and individuals who need Christ's merciful love. This is not a novel idea, but how the Church has encouraged people to live — sharing their faith with those around them — from the very beginning.

# ALUMNI ON MISSION IN THE PARISH: PAOLA PEÑA

Starting in the impressionable collegiate years, you form students who become leaders in the faith, like FOCUS alumna, Paola Peña. Here is her story:

“In 2015, the Lord called me to work at St. Pius X parish in Fairfield, Connecticut. I started as a youth minister in 2015 and spent six years working with teens. It was awesome! In the third year of this role, I realized that I needed to make an effort to meet adults and invest in them as a way to bring in more teens.

So, I led a women’s study for two years. Suddenly, I was ministering to women much older [than me], and I saw their lives change. I used all the formation and tools that I gained in my time with FOCUS to minister to people of various ages.

**“There was nothing for young adults, single people, seniors or for adults in their 40’s and 50’s.”**

“There was nothing for young adults, single people, seniors, or for adults in their 40’s and 50’s. I knew then that small groups would be the best way to reach as many people as possible. They can be tailored to people’s needs and address the struggles of everyday



*Paola Peña, FOCUS missionary alumna*

life. If we can create many spaces of belonging and formation, many pools of different depths, we can show people that there is something for everyone.

“This [past] summer, we announced our parish effort to create a culture of small groups to take place in Fall 2022 and Spring 2023. I am so grateful for FOCUS, the FOCUS Alumni team and for the formation I received to be able to execute the desire God placed on my heart for organic, small group communities that would lead to revival. After seven years of being at St. Pius, building many relationships, tilling the soil, planting seeds — literally every farmer analogy you can think of — **it’s finally happening!**”

“Right now, **there are 20 adults in formation** who are going through *Foundations for Discipleship* by Curtis Martin and Edward Sri to prepare them to lead their own small group in just a few months. This team is also helping me launch and create opportunities for encounter and accompaniment during the in-between months when small groups are not happening, such as holy hours, speaker series and service opportunities.

# ALUMNI AND PARISH RENEWAL

“Because folks are SO BUSY, we are going to work with them and meet them where they are. Here’s how our small group model will work:

- Leaders can facilitate a group at the parish, at home or at a coffee shop at a time that is most convenient for them. We hope to provide to parishioners plenty of opportunities during the week to plug into one of these groups.
- Fall small groups run for seven weeks and the spring one runs for eight weeks. The fall groups begin after the start of school year activities and end before the Christmas holidays. Spring small groups begin the week after the SEEK conference in January.

**“There’s a harvest, and now we have laborers who are bought into the vision and want to play a part!”**

“Our plan is to eventually have small groups for high schoolers, young adults (ages 18-23), young adults (ages 24-39) and adults. There’s a harvest and now we have laborers who are bought into the vision and want to play a part!”



*Paola Peña served as a FOCUS missionary from 2012 – 2015 at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. Her first encounter with FOCUS was during her freshman year at the University of Vermont. During her time as a college student from 2008 – 2012, she met Jesus for the first time, found meaning and purpose in her sufferings, and came to slowly learn and experience the eternal love of the Father.*

*Following her time in FOCUS, she worked as a youth minister for six years from 2015 – 2021 and is now director of evangelization at St. Pius X parish in Fairfield, Connecticut. She also serves as a spiritual director and is currently pursuing a master’s in catechetics and evangelization from Franciscan University in order build up the Body of Christ in her community through a small group model approach. A native of Stamford, Connecticut, she now lives in Bridgeport and spends a lot of her time trying to figure out how many brunches she can host in a month for friends and family.*

**THANK YOU** for launching the newest batch of FOCUS alumni into ***lifelong Catholic mission!***

## FOCUS ALUMNI & EVENTS:

- **65,000+** student alumni
- **2,200+** missionary alumni
- **55** in-person alumni events
- **25+** virtual alumni events

# Ready to lead your diocese deeper into mission?

## What if you could be equipped to go deeper in mission?

Since 2015, **FOCUS Parish** has empowered thousands of parishioners and priests from every walk of life to live their call to mission through workshops, the Making Missionary Disciples track at FOCUS' SEEK conference, digital accompaniment and full-time parish/diocesan missionaries. Clergy and lay persons alike are encountering Christ, growing in the key habits of Christian discipleship and being commissioned as living witnesses to share the Gospel with others.

Visit [focus.org/what-we-do/parish](https://focus.org/what-we-do/parish) to learn more.

The **FOCUS Alumni** team exists to support missionary disciples in your diocese and around the world. They can help you live a vibrant life of faith and mission through continued formation, personal investment, local events, and more.

Visit [focus.org/alumni](https://focus.org/alumni) to learn more.

**We invite you to join us on mission in your home diocese!**

## Christ calls every Catholic to the mission of evangelization.



### FOCUS in the PARISH:

- **14** missionaries serving **22** parishes and dioceses
- **510** parishioners growing as disciples of Christ
- **AND YOU!**



*Join us in celebrating FOCUS' 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary as we reflect on the past, express gratitude to all those who have walked with us, and look forward to continuing our mission of imitating Jesus and sharing the Gospel with others!*



[FOCUS.ORG/ABOUT/THE-MAIN-THING/](https://focus.org/about/the-main-thing/)